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School Reports and School Efficiency. By DAVID S. SNEDDEN AND WILLIAM H. ALLEN. New York: Macmillan, 1908. Pp. 183. Price \$1.50.

"The origin of this study of school reports dates back to 1904," we are told in the Introduction, and is to be found in a discussion which arose in a meeting in New York City, in the course of which someone asked a simple question about the schools, which no one could answer. In the agitation which began at that time, it was made plain that there were no records of many things about schools and pupils which intelligent people might and should wish to know. In May, 1906, the Committee on Physical Welfare of School Children was organized. One definite purpose of this committee was the "effort to secure establishment of such a system of school records and reports as will disclose automatically significant school facts—e.g., regarding backward pupils, truancy, regularity of attendance, registered children not attending, sickness, physical defects, etc."

Three papers by this committee were ready in 1907 for publication, one on home conditions, one on school buildings in their relation to physical defects, and the one here presented, on school reports. The book is, therefore, a report of the New York Committee on Physical Welfare of School Children, of which Dr. Snedden and Dr. Allen are members.

After the Introduction there are seven chapters, of which the first is on "The Purposes of Educational Statistics," the second on "The Beginnings of School Reports in American Cities," and the third on "Efforts of the N. E. A. to Improve School Reports and to Secure Uniformity." The next three chapters contain examples and discussions of statistical tables which have been published, with their merits and faults, and suggestions for improvement. The book closes with a "Practical Study of One School Report" from New York City. A good index adds to the usefulness of the report.

One great purpose of good school reports, according to Professor Snedden, is to make it possible for "the layman of average intelligence, but of more than average interest," to acquire "the information he seeks." It is plain then, that, though this report of the committee is of special value to superintendents and administrative officers, it will also be suggestive to anyone who is interested in the schools and their improvement. It is true, as the report in one instance points out, that figures may deceive; but it is made obvious that there is a great deficiency in the matter of reports, and great consequent difficulty in getting information. This book should do much to improve the conditions.

J. M. C.

Studies and Observations in the Schoolroom. By HENRY ELTON KRATZ. Boston: Educational Publishing Co., 1907. Pp. 220. Price \$0.80.

There is of course no question that in order to perfect the science of education we must fix our attention on the child, and improve our knowledge of him indefinitely. It is of course true that the teacher has a rare opportunity, if he have sufficient intelligence and interest, to record and report the facts of childhood and youth, and so furnish priceless material for the scientist and

philosopher. Every teacher who is making such observations and reports, and every book which publishes them, does valuable service. It is unfortunately equally true, however, that the putting of questions to children, especially about themselves, may be carried too far; that it is easy to ask profitless questions; that persons who set great store by *questionnaires* often exaggerate the weight of evidence afforded by pupils' answers; and that in presenting the records of such investigations there seems a strong tendency toward the picturesque and amusing.

In this volume there are seventeen chapters, besides a brief introduction by E. A. Kirkpatrick. In general, the subjects are treated by quotation from pupils in different schools. Some titles are particularly interesting, e. g., "Children's Knowledge when Entering School," "Children's Reading," "How May Fatigue in the Schoolroom Be Reduced to the Minimum?" One chapter giving an "Outline of a Manual-Training Course," while it has admirable definiteness, is quite different in subject and treatment from the rest of the books. It is not adverse criticism to say that another, on "The Building of Character," suggests, like thousands of other dissertations, our need of a deeper and more scientific conception of the subject, with a careful definition of terms. Perhaps the most valuable chapter for its suggestion is entitled "A Study in Study," and deals with the most fundamental failure in our education.

It would not be difficult to point out certain illustrations in the book of the dangers which beset child-study by the child-answer method. But the long service of Superintendent Kratz in this field and his interest in the subject must attract attention to the volume and give it value. Altogether, it is very readable—often entertaining; it touches important, practical questions; and it gives helpful hints and suggestions.

J. M. C.

BOOKS RECEIVED

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY, NEW YORK

Teaching a District School. A book for young teachers. By JOHN WIRT DINS-MORE. Cloth. Pp. 246. \$1.00.

Latin Prose Composition Based on Cicero. By HENRY CARR PEARSON. Cloth. Pp. 171. \$0.50.

Algebra for Secondary Schools. By E. R. HEDRICK. Half leather. Pp. 431. \$1.00.

Heyse's "Er Soll Dein Herr Sein." Edited by MARTIN H. HAERTEL. Cloth. Pp. 106. \$0.30.

Hyde's Primer. By AMELIA HYDE. Cloth. Illustrated. Pp. 112. \$0.25.

HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA

Americans of Today and Tomorrow. By ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE. Cloth. Pp. 133. \$0.50.

ATKINSON, MENTZER & GROVER, CHICAGO

Applied Arts Drawing Books. Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Edited by WILHELMINA SEEGMILLER. \$0.15 each.